

Media Operations Center  
Alaska Shield  
Vigilant Guard  
Arctic Edge  
EXERCISE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPS



Active Duty News Desk: 907-552-0438  
National Guard News Desk: 907-428-6031

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**009**

**March 31, 2014**

By Capt. Brian Faltinson

Wisconsin National Guard Public Affairs Office

### **Alaska National Guard provides security in statewide disaster exercise**

**VALDEZ, Alaska** — Elements from the Alaska National Guard's 977th Military Police Company, in conjunction with Valdez Emergency Management and National Guard units from other states, trained on security operations across Valdez Saturday. The unit set up security checkpoints at the city's hospital, emergency operations center and at an alternate medical treatment facility operated by a unit from the Arizona National Guard.

As part of the overall remembrance of the 1964 "Good Friday" earthquake, the 297th Military Police Company participated in Exercise Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. VG-AK14 is a regional, tactically focused exercise and will have multiple interagency field-training exercises that are focused on the response and recovery from a major earthquake and tsunami. VG-AK14 is an exercise conducted to ensure the state of Alaska and the nation are prepared and ready to respond to catastrophic events.

The scenario in Valdez revolved around an earthquake and subsequent tsunami that caused significant damage and injured many residents to the point that the city required outside assistance.

"Our main mission in this exercise is to support the civilian authorities and work alongside the police, fire and any FEMA personnel at the scene," said 1st Lt. Jason Walter, Alaska National Guard, platoon leader with the 297th Military Police Company. "Valdez Emergency Management received us very well and did not hesitate to utilize us."

With vital emergency response operations happening at the hospital, emergency operations center and an alternate medical care site, the 297th managed access into those facilities so those inside could concentrate completely on their tasks.

The security piece is important due to the number of people and assets brought to the scenario," said Capt. Eugene Cramer, Alaska National Guard, operations officer with Task Force Valdez, which was the command element of the National Guard emergency response mission to Valdez and Cordova. "The MPs have the ability to train on domestic response emergency procedures as part of their regular mission."

Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 is being conducted March 25 through April 2 in the communities of Anchorage, Matanuska Valley, Valdez, Fairbanks, Cordova and Kodiak.

- more -

The exercise's real-world implications helped the Alaska-based MPs to focus on a mission that could potentially impact them and their neighbors.

"The National Guard trains to support communities, so this is a good opportunity to go out and actually work with the civilians in a community in Alaska where there may be a real disaster," said Staff Sgt. James Zuelow, Alaska National Guard, 297th Military Police Company.

###

Photo cutlines:

140329-Z-NN682-337

A Soldier with the 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard mans a security checkpoint in front of the city of Valdez's Herman Hutchens Elementary School as part of a mass casualty exercise during Vigilant Guard – Alaska 2014, March 29. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Brian Faltinson

140329-Z-NN682-388

A member of the 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard inspects the ID card of a man passing through a security checkpoint at the Providence Valdez Medical Center during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard – Alaska 2014, March 29. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Brian Faltinson

140329-Z-NN682-358

A Soldier with the 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard, coordinates with the patient tracking team of the 966th Area Support Medical Company, Arizona Army National Guard, regarding the location of patients and their family members during a mass casualty training exercise held at the city of Valdez's Herman Hutchens Elementary School during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard – Alaska 2014, March 29. This is a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of different agencies in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Brian Faltinson